**Checklist for Norovirus Outbreaks in Long Term Care**

Date Initiated: Name:

**Recognition, Reporting & Testing**

* Upon suspicion of a norovirus outbreak, notify Maine CDC by calling 1-800-821-5821 or emailing disease.reporting@maine.gov (please no patient information)
* Obtain an outbreak number from Field Epidemiologists for identification purposes: #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Maintain a line listing of symptomatic residents and staff
* Collect and submit 3-5 specimens from affected residents and staff as soon as an outbreak is suspected
* Follow HETL guidelines for specimen collection, handling, and transport; label specimens with Outbreak #
* Outbreak is consider resolved when 96 hours (2 incubation periods) has elapsed from last onset of symptoms

**Control Measures for Facility**

**Infection Control:**

* Institute contact precautions for ill residents during outbreak
* Use mask, gloves and gowns while caring for ill residents and cleaning up feces or vomitus
* Use dedicated or disposable equipment for resident care to minimize transmission
* Cohort ill residents as much as possible and suspend group activities
* Minimize resident and staff movement between affected and unaffected units/wards
* Enforce strict hand hygiene for all facility staff
* Wash hands with soap and water after contamination with vomitus or feces
* Supplement hand washing with soap and water with ethanol or alcohol-based hand sanitizers

**Environmental Controls:**

* Clean all high traffic areas and high touch items (faucets, door handles, and toilet or bath rails)
* Use EPA-registered disinfectants or detergents/disinfectants approved for use against norovirus for routine cleaning and disinfection
* Clean soiled carpets and soft furnishings with hot water and detergent or steam clean as appropriate
* Handle soiled linens carefully using appropriate infection control precautions
* Conduct thorough cleaning of affected personal and communal areas 48 hours after resolution of the last case

**Administrative Controls:**

* Exclude ill staff from work for at least 48 hours after symptoms have resolved
* Suspend group activities as much as possible until after the outbreak is contained. Consider risks/benefits of limiting dining hall services
* Post signage about the outbreak and proper hand hygiene
* Restrict admissions if outbreak escalates or is prolonged

**Recommendations for Residents & Visitors**

* Encourage ill residents to stay in their room/apartment if they are sick to minimize contact with unaffected residents for at least 48 hours after symptoms have resolved
* Promote good hand hygiene for residents: after using the toilet, having contact with an ill individual, and before preparing food, eating or drinking
* Encourage ill visitors to wait at least 48 hours after symptoms resolve before visiting residents
* Consider restricting outside visitation until the outbreak has subsided

**Internal and External Communications**

* Identify a single point of contact for internal communications
* Identify a single point of contact for external communications
* Notify staff of outbreak and control measures and conduct enhanced surveillance for ill staff
* Notify residents/guardians of outbreak and control measures and request ill residents report to nursing staff
* Consider a final communication to staff, residents, and guardians when the outbreak has resolved

**Please refer to Maine CDC’s Norovirus Outbreak Guidance for Long Term Care for more detail**

**Available at** [**http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/norovirus**](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/norovirus)

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